



**(U//FOUO) Interview with... [REDACTED], Technical Director,  
Strategic Intelligence Issues (S17)**

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*(U//FOUO) Note from SIGINT Communications: Today's interview is with [REDACTED], who is retiring from the Agency this week:*

- (U) What was your first job at the Agency?

(S//SI) In 1974 I started work in the Special Project Office (A73). It was a small office of about six people that handled any specially compartmented intelligence about the Soviet Navy. In those days, some types of material were compartmented that today are not; e.g. regular imagery was compartmented at that time.

- (U) What are some of the best opportunities you've had in your career?

(S//SI) In the 1980's, I participated in naval war games, in which I got to play the part of a Soviet commander. This tested my knowledge of Soviet doctrine, but also gave me insights into how the U.S. military uses SIGINT for planning. I encourage everyone to participate in such war games if they have the chance.

(S//SI) I also worked on task forces in the 1990's, such as one that assessed the CBRN (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear) threat to the U.S. I worked with some extremely smart people -- experts in the field -- and found it a great experience to learn and contribute at a high level. Such opportunities are one of the best aspects of a career in SIGINT.

- (U) What has been the biggest change you've seen in the Agency during your career?

(U//FOUO) That's an easy one: computers! Early in my career, we were still writing reports by hand and delivering them to a typing pool. Some of my reports were quite long (over 100 handwritten pages), and it would take a couple of days for the typists to get it all down. Since it was not possible to manipulate text the way we can now, you had to give greater thought to what you wanted to say, and how, before you picked up the pen. We also took pity on the typists and tried to write neatly!

- (U) What projects for the future are you excited about?

(S//SI) For one, I think that the use of issue management teams (IMTs), which seek to optimize SIGINT against important issues, will pay great dividends in the future. I also think that "knowledge sharing" will flower in years to come. This involves deploying out into the workforce the tools that will allow them to easily share information with other subject matter experts. We have the technology to do this, but it will require a cultural change to get everyone accustomed to routinely sharing information with everyone who can benefit from it. I've been involved with both of these initiatives in recent years, and I'm optimistic about their future.

- (U) Overall, what was the most memorable experience you've had during your career?

(S//SI) The best experience was my PCS to GCHQ in Cheltenham, England from 1977 to 1982. My work in the Combined Naval Party, where I was the only NSA civilian, was very rewarding. As an added benefit, the countrified lifestyle in the Cotswolds region made it a wonderful place for a young family to live. We liked it so much, I asked to extend my tour.

(U) In terms of the most important event, that would be the letter I received about 31 years ago

confirming that I had been hired to work at NSA. It's tempting to wonder what my life would be like if I had taken a different path, but I can say I'm very satisfied with how everything worked out as a result of my coming to work at the Agency.

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(U) We wish [REDACTED] the best in his retired life!

(U) See other interviews in this series:

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